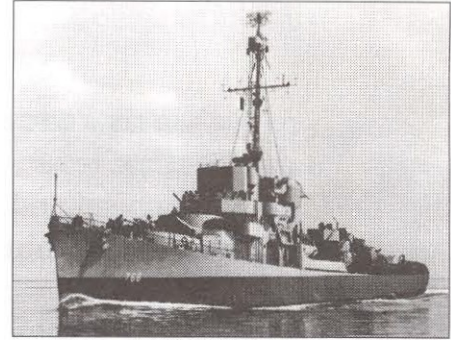


SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS Slater's Volunteers

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Mid February .. Only six more weeks until opening day . . . April First.

That's only six more weeks to finish the second deck forward, the messdeck, crew's berthing, CPO mess and passage. Better stay on that paint chipping, but **Joanne McFadden and Pat Perrella** are bugging me that it's time to put out another *Signals*, so down with the needle gun and back to the desk!

Weather conditions continuing to present obstacles. The ice is out of the river, but last Monday it was 7 degrees at 9 am. Eight volunteers were aboard; everyone over the age of 70 with the exception of **Rafael**. There's nothing more frustrating than having 5 men ready to chip paint and the airlines are clogged with ice - it slows us down but does not stop us!

We're making good progress- All the tile has been pulled off the second deck and all the decks are ready for painting. **Barry, Larry and Gary** along with several helpers whose names don't rhyme have completely rewired the messdecks and berthing space; installing incandescent light fixtures, red lights, compartment fans, emergency lights, switchboxes and fuse boxes. Almost all hands have had a part in cutting out old cable and replacing it with new armored cable. **Clark Farnsworth and George Erwin** have done the metal work; welding brackets for light fixtures, hooks for bunks, repairing watertight doors and making grills for vents. **Tom Moore and Angelo Bracco** continue work replacing insulation. **Tom Beeler** is making locker tops for the CPO mess. Chippers **Dick, Chris, Les, Mike, Bob, Gordon,** and **Dutch** and a host of others - disguised with masks & goggles - lead the way with **Ray Lammers** hauling out countless buckets of trash and chips topside. **Roy Gunther** moves in to prep and mask the spaces for painting. We have also received lots of help from the **Albany Naval Reserve Center's LST Unit.**

Chris Fedden and Bob Callender have become a two-man destruction team, ripping out postwar bulkheads and ductwork with a sawzall, chisel and grinder. No torches needed-- Somehow we'll have it all together for opening day.

Dick Walker has all the nuts and bolts pretty well squared away, saving the rest of us hours of searching. The new locker is located right forward of the machine shop and the 20 mm magazine. The old storage locker aft formerly known as "nut and bolt hell" will become a DC locker.

We moved the crew out of the Chief's Quarters and up to the wardroom until we finish painting below. So, if you're looking for the joe pot it's been moved. For the winter months the **Coffee Fund** has also become the **Kerosene Fund**. We need both in the morning- just so no one get confused which is which!

Rafael Suarez has issued a challenge to the crew. He says he can scale the forward crew berthing space faster than the rest of the crew can do the messdecks. Like *JOHN HENRY* versus the STEAM DRILL, "a man ain't nuthin but a man". But Raf is close on our tails and he's doing a real quality job.

During the first week of May, we will welcome the members of the *MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF DESA*. They will live aboard Slater for another workweek. Plans are for them to continue with topside painting and work on the flying bridge companionway. We have heard they already have 17 men signed up!

Tom Kidd of DESA has agreed to help coordinate DESA Field Days aboard the *Slater*. If you represent a DESA Chapter and are interested in coming to Albany to help us restore *Slater*, **WE NEED YOU!!** It's a cold water hose, pier side port-a-john, and the bunks are more cramped than you remember, but if you can handle it, **WE NEED YOU !!**

Speaking of Road Trips, Roy Gunther and Gordon Lattey are planning another scrounging trip to Portsmouth, Virginia the week of March 15th. If you are into ship scavenging and can handle paying your expenses, we'll add you to the crew. Please contact me at the ship so we can coordinate the arrangements. Thanks to **Barry Witte** and **Gordon Lattey** who have volunteered for the **EMERGENCY RESPONSE SQUAD**. And, "*Special Thanks*" to Gordon's wife **Michele** for returning his permission-slip.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS . . . The Weekend of March 27 and 28 will be the big ***SLATER CLEAN-UP TO GET HER READY FOR OPENING DAY*** staff and volunteer crew event! All this work and restoration progress has created quite a mess and it will take a lot of help to get her Spic and Span for the returning tour guests. We'll keep you posted . . . By the way ... We have not firmed up our date for our move back to the *Snow Dock* but we expect it will be the last week in March.

We need a piece of furniture. If you've noticed the wardroom, there is something missing; the ugly dark green government sofa! If you happen to have an ugly, old Naugahyde sofa to donate, send us a photo. It must be dark green, brown or black. The winner will receive a lifetime Foundation membership upon delivery.

SLATER TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH: Do you know what a plasma cutter is? Do you have a plasma cutter? Can you use a plasma cutter? If you answered "yes" to all of the above questions, you and your plasma cutter have won a special pass to spend a day in *SLATER'S* radio room and CIC to demonstrate your skills. Give us a call if you qualify.

NOTES FROM NANCY- The *Slater* exhibit at Crossgates Mall continues to attract visitors and the sales from the Dog-tags have helped to compensate for our on-ship's store winter closing. Thanks to everyone who has turned out on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to help promote the cause. Mall hours are also different from the usual ship visiting hours so the gang remains until the last visitor's questions are answered. Our wish is that many will show up to see *Slater* when she returns to the Snow Dock and all our efforts will be worthwhile.

Watch for details concerning the new sign-up sheet for Tour Guides and Dockworkers (ticket-sellers, greeters, etc.) in the MARCH ISSUE of *SLATER SIGNALS*. We are hoping to make it easier for everyone to volunteer!

On Wednesday, February 10th, a labor crisis was narrowly averted aboard *SLATER*. Former teamster and local President, **Richard Smith, DE-5**, announced at lunch that at 1 PM all members over the age of seventy were going to walk off the job and throw up a picket-line! It seems some of the elder members of the local volunteer contingent took offense to a paragraph in the **January *SLATER SIGNALS***, and the statement "Thank God we have some younger volunteers!" Only intense negotiation and a promise to our elders that we would issue the following Editorial Statement averted a walkout.

HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE EDITOR AND STAFF
OF THE PUBLICATION KNOWN AS *SLATER SIGNALS*:

WE "BOOMERS" MIGHT BE YOUNGER BUT OUR ELDERS ARE
STILL ***TRIM BUT DEADLY!!!***

The Local also reaffirmed its position that it was well satisfied with working conditions and salary, but remained concerned about NAFTA and it's possible effect on job security. Management would like to take this opportunity to state categorically that there are NO PLANS to take the ***SLATER*** to Mexico and complete the restoration in Acapulco, no matter how cold it gets up here! Warmer days are coming, and winter is flying by. I'd better get back on the needle gun